



Pinehurst

GREEN GRID

OCTOBER 2004

WELCOME

As Project Manager, I would like to welcome you to the first edition of the Pinehurst Green Grid newsletter. The City of Seattle has created this newsletter to keep the neighborhood informed of the latest developments on the Pinehurst Green Grid natural drainage project.

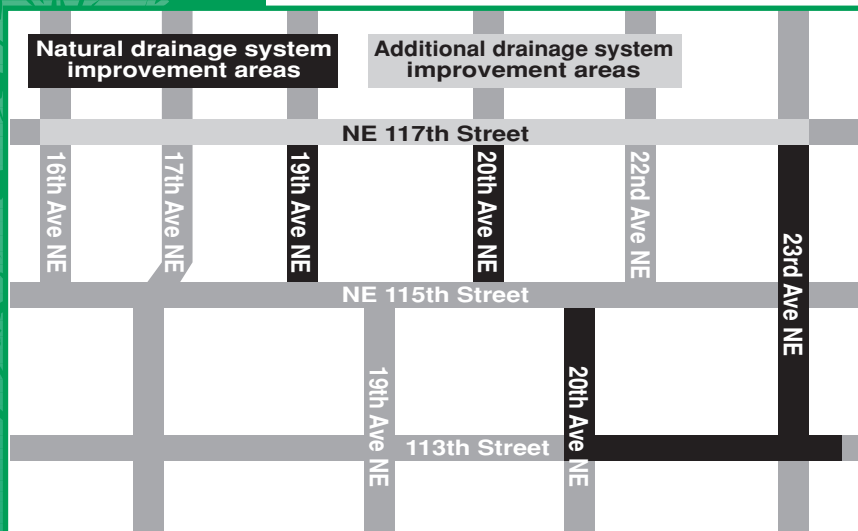
The new infrastructure will reduce flooding to streets and homes in the neighborhood, improve water quality to Thornton Creek and reduce the peak flows to the creek during storms. The project will also include neighborhood enhancements such as

- A new sidewalk on most project streets
- New roadways on most project streets
- Landscaping utilizing native and non-native plants
- New trees along project streets

You have probably received some information about this project already. The City held our first public meeting in the neighborhood in June to provide neighbors with information and to share our preliminary design drawings for each street. The project designers are hard at work incorporating your feedback into our design. We will hold additional public meetings when the design gets farther along and prior to construction. Check out page 4 for more details about the project schedule.

As always, if you have questions or comments about the project, please feel free to call me or send me and email (contact information on page 4).

- Keith Ward, Project Manager



Pinehurst is the third Seattle neighborhood to receive a pilot project in the City's award-winning Natural Drainage System program (see article this page). This ambitious project will bring six blocks of natural drainage system and five additional blocks of improved drainage infrastructure to the Pinehurst neighborhood.

Natural Drainage Systems Receive \$100,000 Award

On July 28, the City of Seattle's Natural Drainage Systems program received an Innovations in American Government Award from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. Referred to as the Oscars of good government, the award included a grant of \$100,000 to help expand the program.

"This recognition confirms that natural drainage systems are an effective way to

manage stormwater," said Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Director Chuck Clarke. "I'm extremely proud of the creative thinkers in SPU who come up with these kind of innovative ideas."

In 2003, the Natural Systems program also won a 2020 Vision Award from the Puget Sound Regional Council.



NATURAL DRAINAGE

In each newsletter we will provide neighbors with information about natural drainage systems, what they are, why they are important and how they work. This issue we focus on history.

A History of Natural Drainage in Seattle

Or “How we got here”

Increasing awareness of the negative impacts human activities have on creeks, lakes and wetlands has driven significant changes in the way cities manage their stormwater. Rooftops, streets, and parking lots do not allow rainwater to seep into the soil. Instead, the water is carried away from these and other “impervious” surfaces through pipes and ditches to Seattle’s creeks. Pollution from activities such as landscaping, transportation, and business, is carried by this runoff, impacting the food chain that supports fish and other wildlife. This fast-flowing stormwater wears away stream channels, destroying the habitat that wildlife needs to thrive.

A new solution

In Seattle, the term natural drainage system is used to describe projects that strive to meet multiple goals within street right-of-ways, which account for one quarter of Seattle’s land.

- They help to manage flooding in neighborhoods.
- They improve the appearance and function of the street right-of-way.
- They provide responsible stewardship of the environment.
- They help the City meet local, state and national environmental regulations.

These projects use natural features – open swales (ponds) with plants, stormwater cascades, and small wetland ponds – to mimic nature. These systems work in two ways, some move stormwater through a series of cascading pools and others store stormwater in swales allowing the water to slowly infiltrate (seep) back into the soil. The Pinehurst Green Grid project will use swales to infiltrate stormwater in the neighborhood.

At the heart of all natural drainage system projects are the plants and trees, and the deep, healthy soils that support them. (See “Corner Garden” on page 3.) These combine to form a “living infrastructure” that, unlike pipes and underground stormwater vaults, improve in function over time.

Community and agency response

Communities have responded very positively to natural drainage systems, indicating that traditional curb/gutter/piped drainage is not always the best choice for new drainage infrastructure, nor is it always the most cost-effective. These new projects have also met with enthusiastic approval from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Ecology as a strategy to achieve regulatory compliance goals.

Projects

The City has constructed two prototypes and two pilot projects including:

- SEA Street on 2nd Avenue NW between NW 117th Street and 120th Street
- 110th Cascade on NE 110th Street from 3d Ave NW to Greenwood Ave N
- Broadview Green Grid between NE 107th and NE 110th from 2nd Avenue NW to Phinney Ave N, but excluding Greenwood Ave N

The Pinehurst Green Grid project is in design and the High Point natural drainage system, part of the High Point Redevelopment Project in West Seattle is currently under construction.



NEIGHBORHOOD FEEDBACK

Beginning with the public meeting in June and continuing with one-on-one conversations and emails, a great dialogue has begun between the project team and the Pinehurst neighborhood. In that dialogue we heard two main concerns from you: changes in parking and the location of the sidewalks.

Parking

Many of you have expressed concern that the new street designs will reduce the available on-street parking in the project area. We understand your concern. It is shared by the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) who conducted a block-by-block assessment of the legal parking in the project area. This assessment was conducted as part of the evaluation process to determine if Pinehurst was the right area to implement natural drainage.

On each block in the project area, SDOT evaluated the parking demand. While the project will reduce the total number of parking spaces, each street will continue to provide adequate parking for resident's needs, having more parking spaces than the highest number of parked vehicles recorded during the study.

Available on-street parking will be reduced, but the remaining parking will be similar to many other areas of the city. The need to use more of the area for drainage and a new sidewalk is the reason for a change in how the street

right-of way is used. Parking will only be allowed on one side of the street. The other will be used for drainage swales. Less space will be available for other uses and you may need to use parking available in your driveways more often. Storing RVs and trailers and angle parking, has always been illegal, but only enforced by complaint.

Sidewalks

The City recognizes the importance of pedestrian safety. As part of this project sidewalks will be installed on most project streets. Sidewalks are a great asset to a community, providing a safe place for children and families to walk, and encouraging people to get out and meet their neighbors. Many of you have asked about the location of the sidewalks. During the conceptual design phase, we evaluated both options for the sidewalk placement: either separated from, or next to the street. The three primary benefits of the sidewalk being separated from the street are safety (not having pedestrians, especially children, walking right next to traffic), accessibility (sidewalks immediately next to the curb are more likely to be blocked by vehicles), and aesthetics (it is much more pleasant to have a buffer that provides separation from pedestrians and automobiles). As a result, where possible, sidewalks will be separated from the street by a planting area. Where we have design limitations, or are trying to preserve mature trees that would need to be removed if the sidewalk was separated, we will place portions of the sidewalk next to the street. 🌿



Corner Garden


Landscaping in the right-of-way (ROW) is a key feature in natural drainage projects. Not only do plants and trees greatly enhance the look and feel of a neighborhood, in a natural drainage system, they are an integral part of the infrastructure. They help to remove pollution from the water and allow the City to manage the drainage locally, greatly reducing the amount of runoff that leaves the neighborhood and rushes to the creek.

Because you know your yard better than anyone else, but are likely to be unfamiliar with what works best in a natural drainage system, the success of this project depends on a partnership between you and our Landscape Architect, Shane Dewald. Some of you met Shane at our meeting in June. In the next couple of weeks, you will receive a questionnaire from her asking about your gardening style, the kinds of plants you like and any particular concerns or requests you have for

landscaping near your home. This questionnaire will help Shane to design landscaping that fits your needs as a homeowner and also provides valuable stormwater management for the project. She will follow up with phone calls and one-on-one visits, when possible, to clarify your input. Shane will also be at future public meetings and available to answer questions. She can be reached at (206) 684-5041 or by email at shane.dewald@seattle.gov.

Some of you have been contacted by Keith Ward regarding plants or structures that are in the ROW. If you have questions about where the ROW is and whether or not this will affect any plants or structures that you have, please contact him. If you have plants that you would like to keep, these need to be transplanted onto your property. Fall and spring are good times to transplant.

PROJECT SCHEDULE



Summer 2004	Project under design
November 2004	Project reaches 90% design – community meetings planned
Spring 2005	Project out to bid – community meeting planned
Summer 2005	Construction begins on first block
Spring 2006	Construction completed, landscaping continues through the fall and winter

Who should I contact for more information?

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact:

Keith Ward, Project Manager

206-615-0734

keith.ward@seattle.gov

Information about the city's natural drainage program is also available on our website at www.seattle.gov/util/naturalsystems

Other resources on the web:

<http://depts.washington.edu/cuwrn/>

<http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/LID.htm>

<http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/>

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please send a request to Keith at the email address listed above.



City of Seattle

Seattle Public Utilities
Engineering Services Branch
Attn: Keith Ward
Key Tower, Suite 4900
700 Fifth Avenue
PO Box 34018
Seattle, WA 98124-4018

For more information on the City of Seattle's Natural Drainage Systems Project, please visit our website at: www.seattle.gov/util/naturalsystems

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